

In the claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A joint for bullet traps, the joint comprising:

a first plate;

a second plate disposed in a linear arrangement with the first plate so as to form a joint;

a facing strip disposed along the joint, the facing strip having a first end and a second end with lateral edges extending along the sides therebetween configured for engaging the first plate and the second plate, the facing strip being bent between the lateral edges of the facing strip so as to form two sides which slope outwardly from the bend to the lateral edges and toward the first plate and the second plate ~~and~~ such that the facing strip contact contacts the first plate and the second plate only at the lateral edges of the facing strip;

at least one bracket, the at least one bracket comprising a slot extending inwardly from an edge of the at least one bracket, the at least one bracket being welded to the facing strip;

a backing means placed along the joint on the side of the first and second plates opposite the facing strip; and

at least one bolt for attaching the facing strip to the backing means, the at least one bolt being disposed in the slot of the at least one bracket so as to be attached to the facing strip without penetrating through the facing strip therethrough.

2. (Currently Amended) The joint for bullet traps of claim 1, wherein the at least one bracket is generally flat and disposed generally parallel to the lateral edges of the facing strip. ~~further comprising at least one bracket attached to the facing strip for receiving a bolt.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The joint for bullet traps of claim 2, wherein the first plate and second plate comprise bullet proof plate steel. ~~at least one bracket comprises an opening for sliding a bolt into the bracket.~~

4. (Currently Amended) The joint for bullet traps of claim 2, wherein the at least one bracket comprises at least two brackets each having a slot formed therein ~~an opening~~ for receiving a bolt, and wherein the ~~openings~~ slots on the at least two brackets are disposed on opposite sides of the brackets from one another.

5. (Currently Amended) The joint for bullet traps of claim 1, wherein the facing strip has ~~walls~~ sides extending rearwardly to the first plate and the second plate at an angle of about 12.5 degrees.

6. (Currently Amended) The joint for bullet traps of claim 2 ~~1~~, wherein the at least one bracket contacts the first and second plates.

7. (Currently Amended) A joint of a bullet trap, the joint comprising:
a first bullet proof metal plate;

a second bullet proof metal plate having an edge disposed adjacent an edge of the first bullet proof metal plate;

a facing strip ~~having a~~ being bent central portion along the center thereof so as to define two sides and so as to form an angle less than 180 degrees between the two sides such that the two sides extend both outwardly and backwardly from the center thereof, and walls having lateral edges extending substantially the length of the facing strip ~~and extending away from the bent central portion,~~ the facing strip being disposed along the adjacent edges of the first and second plates so as to cover the adjacent edges of the first and second plates such that only the lateral edges of the facing strip contact the first and second plates;

at least one bracket comprising a flat piece of plate steel having a slot formed therein, the slot extending inwardly from an edge thereof, the at least one bracket being disposed in a generally planar relationship to the lateral edges of the facing strip and being welded ~~attached~~ to the facing strip, the at least one bracket being configured for engaging a bolt so as to hold the bolt to the facing strip without the bolt penetrating through the facing strip therethrough; and

at least one bolt for holding the facing strip against the first and second plates.

8. (Currently Amended) The joint according to claim 7, wherein the ~~walls~~ sides of the facing strip extend rearwardly from the bent central portion at an angle of about 12.5 degrees.

9. (Currently Amended) The joint according to claim 7, wherein the at least one bracket comprises a plurality of brackets, each of the brackets having a slot extending from an edge thereof ~~an opening~~ for receiving a bolt and at least two of the brackets having the slot ~~opening~~ on opposing sides thereof.

10. (Currently Amended) A bullet proof joint comprising:

a first bullet proof metal plate;

a second bullet proof metal plate having an edge thereof disposed adjacent an edge of the first bullet proof metal plate;

a facing strip configured to engage the first and second bullet proof plates, the facing strip being bent along the center thereof such that only the edges of the facing strip which are parallel to the bend contact the bullet proof plates;

at least one bracket attached to the facing strip and having a slot ~~an opening~~ for receiving the shank of a bolt and preventing the head of a bolt from passing therethrough and for holding the bolt to the facing strip without penetrating through the facing strip ~~therethrough~~; and

at least one bolt for holding the facing strip against the bullet proof plates.

11. (Currently Amended) The joint according to claim 10, wherein the at least one bracket comprises a plurality of brackets having slots ~~openings~~, and wherein at least two of the brackets having slots ~~openings~~ disposed on opposite sides from one another.

12. (Previously Presented) The joint according to claim 10, wherein the facing strip has two walls disposed about 155 degrees from one another.

13. (Currently Amended) A bullet proof joint comprising:

a pair of bullet proof steel plates disposed such that an edge of one plate is adjacent the edge of the other plate;

a joint strip disposed to cover the adjacent edges of the bullet proof plates comprising:

a facing strip defining a pair of sloped walls extending outwardly and rearwardly from a central portion extending along a long axis of the facing strip such that only the edges of the sloped walls contact the plates; and

means for attaching a plurality of bolts to the facing strip without the bolts penetrating through the facing strip comprising a plurality of brackets permanently attached to the facing strip, each of the brackets being configured to receive a bolt;

a backing strip disposed to cover the adjacent edges of the bullet proof plates on the side of the plates opposite the facing strip; and

a plurality of bolts for holding the facing strip, bullet proof plates, and backing strip together.

14. (Currently Amended) The joint according to claim 13, wherein the facing strip is bent lengthwise into an angle of about 155 degrees, and wherein sides of the facing strip extend linearly so as to contact the bullet proof steel plates only at an edge thereof. ~~wherein the means for attaching the plurality of bolts to the facing strip comprises a plurality of brackets fixedly attached to the facing strip, each of the brackets being configured to receive a bolt.~~

15. (Previously Presented) The joint according to claim 14, wherein at least two of the brackets have slots for receiving a bolt, the slots being disposed on opposing sides of the brackets.

16. (Currently Amended) A method for reducing splatter through a an opening in a bullet trap, the method comprising:

disposing first and second plates adjacent one another so as to leave an opening;
selecting a facing strip, the facing strip being bent lengthwise into an angle;
selecting a plurality of attachment bolts;
attaching the plurality of attachment bolts to the facing strip such that the bolts do not penetrate the facing strip;
placing a facing strip over the opening generally parallel to the opening so that the facing strip slopes rearwardly and outwardly such that the only portion of the facing strip brought into engagement with the first and second plates to secure the plates together is the lateral edges of the facing strip.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 16, wherein the method further comprises attaching the plurality of attachment bolts to the facing strip with brackets prior to the placement of the facing strip against the plates.

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the method further comprises removably positioning the bolts in the brackets.

19. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 17, wherein at least two of the brackets have slots ~~openings~~ for receiving the bolts, and wherein the openings are disposed on opposing sides of the brackets.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for forming a section of a bullet trap, the method comprising:

placing first and second plates adjacent one another so as to leave a seam therebetween;

selecting a joint strip having a facing strip which is beveled to have two rearwardly extending walls terminating at lateral edges and a bracket permanently attached to the facing strip for holding an end of a bolt to the facing strip, the bracket being attached to the facing strip independent of the bolt;

covering the seam between the plates with the facing strip so that the bolt extends through the seam; and

engaging the lateral edges of the facing strip with the first and second plates so that the only portion of the facing strip which touches the first and second plates is the lateral edges.

21. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 20, wherein the method further comprises placing a backing strip along the seam on the side of the plates opposite the joint strip.

22. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 20, wherein the method further comprises selecting a joint strip having a plurality of brackets attached to the facing strip for holding a plurality of bolts.

23. (Currently Withdrawn) A method for preventing splatter through between two plates disposed at a generally perpendicular angle, the method comprising:

disposing a first plate and a second plate so that the plates are disposed generally perpendicular;

attaching the first plate and the second plate to one another by a generally L-shaped angle joint;

and

positioning a generally flat plate in front of the generally L-shaped angle joint so that the generally flat plate extends from the first plate to the second plate and thereby conceals the angle joint.

24. (Currently Amended) A method for forming a bullet proof joint, the method comprising:

placing an edge of a first steel plate adjacent an edge of a second plate so as to form a joint;

selecting a joint strip, the joint strip comprising a facing strip which is formed to have two rearwardly extending walls terminating at lateral edges and at least one bracket permanently attached to the facing strip for holding an end of a bolt to the facing strip, the at least one bracket being attached to the facing strip independent of the bolt; and

covering the joint between the steel plates with the joint strip so that the only portion of the facing strip which touches the first and second plates is the lateral edges.